

UERSA WALKING GROUP

July - September 2009

Dates: Monday, 6 July Tuesday, 21 July(short) Wednesday, 5 August
Tuesday, 18 August Tuesday, 15 September Thursday, 24 September

The spring period has seen some excellent walks with good turnouts and enjoyable lunches. I write this as Midsummer Madness appears on the horizon and that will be reported in the next circulation. In the July – September period there are six walks including a repeat by Roger and Roseanne of their Quantocks walk and a new take on the Meldon Reservoir area by John Boyle. The imbalance between short and long walks reflects the current leaders preference for long walks. To address this we need more leaders who like short walks. Any volunteers?

Trevor June 2009

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- **10.30 am Monday, 6 July Quantocks 7-8 miles**

PACKED LUNCH REQUIRED

Meet at Lydeard Hill car park (GR180338).

This is a variation of a walk some have done before but others have missed. It takes us over Lydeard Hill, with fine views over the Bristol Channel to Wales. Shortly we turn NE down a steep hill to Durborough Farm and up the other side of the valley over Aisholt Common to the edge of Great Wood. We then walk along the edge of (or through) Great Wood to Triscombe Stone and down to Triscombe. After an optional stop at the Blue Ball we walk SE along the edge of Bagborough Wood and then ascend the hill to the ridgeway which we follow back to the car park. For those who wish to indulge there is the option of a cream tea at the end of the walk.

Roger & Roseanne

- **10.15 am Tuesday, 21 July The Powderham Estate 4 miles**

Meet at Powderham Church Car Park. This is an easy walk on roads and paths around Powderham Castle. Hopefully we will see the deer! There will be good views of the estuary if fine.
Lunch at the Orangery Restaurant afterwards.

Trish Bisley

- **10.15 am Wednesday, 5 August Meldon 7 miles**

PACKED LUNCH REQUIRED

It would start from the Meldon carpark (GR 563917), go up past the iceworks to Sourton Tor then over to Sandy Ford on the West Okement. I shall have to remind myself of where we go from there, either down the river through Black Tor copse or up to High Willhays and then back to the starting point. About 5 hrs with a picnic lunch.

John B

- **10.15 am Tuesday, 18 August Bennett's Cross 8 miles**

PACKED LUNCH REQUIRED

Start : Car parking area to West of Bennett's Cross (Grid Ref. SX 680817).

Distance : 8 miles

Terrain : Moor and footpaths, with no road walking.

Route : Bennett's Cross ~ West Coombe ~ Lettaford ~ Hurston ~ Chagford Common ~ Water Hill ~ Bennett's Cross.

Mike and Suzanne

- **10.30 am Tuesday, 15 September** **Coldridge** **8 miles**
PACKED LUNCH REQUIRED

12.8km/8miles - approx. 4 hours.

Start/parking - The Square, Coldridge - Grid ref SS 697076

Terrain - Well-signed footpaths and country lanes. A few short uphill sections.

Stiles - 19 (is this a record?)

Take a Tarka tour. Following a lovely section of the Tarka Trail along the bends of the River Taw, this route links three fine churches - Coldridge, Brushford and Nymet Rowland - by quiet country lanes and footpaths. This is typical Devon, with rolling hills, a patchwork of fields, woods and deep winding lanes. The walk begins at Coldridge, where cob and thatch houses are grouped around the square. The churches on route are of particular interest. Hope as many of you as possible can join John and I.

Barbara & John

- **10.30 am Thursday, 24 September** **Manaton** **9 miles**
PACKED LUNCH REQUIRED

Start at Manaton Church Car Park.

Manaton, Easdon, North Bovey, Lustleigh Cleave, Water, Manaton.

A lovely walk, mainly on tracks with 3 hill climbs, and splendid views over south east Dartmoor. About 5 hours.

Tom Davies

RECENT WALKS 2009

Dulverton/Exmoor, 2nd April

Sixteen walkers congregated in the car park in Dulverton, having set out from home on a bright, sunny Spring day. Unfortunately Exmoor was overcast by a cold grey mist or cloud! Undaunted, the party set off through the small town centre past the church perched imposingly at the top of the town and up a track northwards. After a steady climb we turned into a field and followed a grassy track up through several fields. There were some mutterings about the fine weather left behind in Exeter! Eventually we arrived at the top of the hill, identified by the trig point, not by the impressive views of the Exe and Barle valleys which our leader assured us were spread out below. After a slight detour (wrong way due to the mist obscuring the route) we progressed through more fields, farm yard and lanes to the highest point of the walk where we sheltered behind a grassy bank to eat our lunch. Miraculously a pale sun appeared briefly through the mist and as we turned south after lunch and descended towards Dulverton the sky gradually turned from grey to blue and the sun shone. A lovely track through beech woods took us back to the River Barle and after one last climb the walk concluded with a pleasant stroll through woods severely damaged by February's snowfall, back to Dulverton where the whole party retired to a sunny courtyard for a much appreciated cream tea.

Roseanne



The Exe Valley Way – returning to Dulverton and a well-earned and delicious cream tea

Tipton St John & River Otter, 23rd April

A good number of cars arrived at 'The Golden Lion' car park in Tipton St. John on a pleasant but somewhat misty morning. At the appointed hour, one car screeched in having followed the Satnav instructions and waited in the **Church** car park. Another car screeched out heading for Pennsylvania as footwear was reported to be 'slippers'. The walk began with all the uphill on road and bridleway (rather nice to do this when fresh and eager) to reach Fire Beacon Plantation and Hollowhead Cross in beautiful woods. Continuing, we reached Beacon Hill and magnificent open views of the coast. Descending through more woods and meadows we came to Harpford Village. Chatter was so interesting that, at this point, the final three sauntered on through the village not noticing that the others had turned right to cross the River Otter. Mobile phones, a speedy walker and our leader running managed to retrieve the missing persons and all meandered back along the river to 'The Golden Lion' and a delicious lunch in the sunny courtyard. Two did the short level option and the two who returned after collecting boots in Pennsylvania (and my understanding of 'slippers' was corrected to 'slip-ons'!) arrived to eat with us having done a high but slightly shorter route! A beautiful walk – many thanks to Alan, our leader (hope that your first walk as leader wasn't too stressful!). The total number of walkers (on the three routes!) was 17.

Ruth



Beautiful yellow field – we discovered Dandelions! Harpford – search party sent out for 3 missing persons!

River Otter, Budleigh, 13th May

Fifteen arrived at the Budleigh car park with enough drizzle in the air to dissuade David Batty from wearing his shorts. The enthusiasts included three new additions to the group and, when Patrick and Sue arrived, delayed because they had to go back for Patrick's waterproof, we wondered whether he knew something that we didn't. Once we were walking all these anxieties disappeared as did the rain and we had a splendid day. The route criss-crossed our previous walks with them and rarely overlapped. Much of it was on little known green lanes (delightful for walking) which, for me, have the ability to make me lose my bearings. Eventually we climbed across the golf course to the cliffs west of Budleigh and had a pleasant lunch overlooking the sea. Then down into Budleigh. Many thanks to Patrick and Sue.

Trevor



Bluebells



Dawlish Warren – deserted (except for some hungry walkers)

Lympstone – Dawlish, 27th May

Wednesday May 27th dawned dank and blustery – the one wet day in a fine week – so it was a depleted group of just ten hardy souls who gathered at Lympstone Station that morning. We walked through Lympstone Village then took the route of the new Cycle / Walkway southwards down the Exe estuary to Exmouth. The path, itself, which forms part of the National Cycle Network Route 2, made for easy walking and offered some excellent views over the water. And we had it almost to ourselves – we met no cyclists and only the rare dog-walker. We were dampened by the rain but blown dry again by the strong wind which gusted across the water. Arriving at Exmouth we availed ourselves of a comfort stop at the bus station while Trevor checked that the water taxi would be operating, given the high wind. It was, and so with some trepidation we made our way to the harbour. In the event, the crossing was smooth and we landed on Dawlish Warren, the boat beaching itself on the sand, down onto which we leapt – with greater or lesser agility! Lunch was a pleasant interlude spent sheltering from the elements in the bird hide (fortunately empty of bird watchers). With the afternoon the weather cheered up and the sun came out. We took the route along the dune edge above the beach – good thigh-muscle exercise in the loose sand – into the holiday centre, and thence along the sea wall to Dawlish. A hoped-for tea/coffee at the Red Rock Cafe was thwarted (the cafe was closed) and further refreshment was postponed ‘til our arrival at Dawlish; and thence by train homewards. Despite the weather conspiring against us at the start, this was altogether a most enjoyable walk, impeccably organised, as always, by Trevor.

Val Maxfield

Tiverton – Bickleigh, 15th June

Thirteen gathered at Tiverton Bus Station on a beautiful sunny morning but some brought dark portents of thunderstorms to come. Undeterred we negotiated our way to a little known route out of Tiverton, down the east side of the river with some scenic views of the sewage works.

After that it became very rural, warm and idyllic through woods and meadows and along riverside paths. This notoriously muddy section of the Exe Valley Way produced some mud but not enough to impede progress and a lot less than Ruth and I had encountered on two previous visits.

While pausing in a riverside meadow for a drink, storm clouds could be seen in the distance and prudence suggested a brisk final walk into Bickleigh with Tom Davies as the pace setter (training us up for his next walk?). We made it to Bickleigh as the raindrops started and we enjoyed a leisurely lunch at the Mill. About an hour and a half later, on the way back, we drove through a torrential downpour. Our luck is still holding up!

Trevor